Serial No. 10/786,262
Office Action Dated: 04/26/06
Response to Office Action Dated: 07/25/06

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please replace all previous versions of the claims with the following listing:

1. (Currently Amended) A welded portion constitution between a first member and a second member, comprising:

an inclined portion provided on an end portion of at least one of said first member and second member, said inclined portion formed by a bend in said end portion; and

a weld bead provided so as to cover at least a part of said inclined portion.

2. (Withdrawn) A method of welding a first member and a second member, comprising the steps of:

forming an inclined portion by bending an end portion of at least one of said first member and second member; and

welding said first member to said second member such that a weld bead is formed on at least a part of said inclined portion.

3. (Currently Amended) A constitution for a butt-welded portion between tubular members in which a tubular strip is arranged ~~inserted into the~~ inside of the abutting portion, comprising:

a contact portion formed on an end portion of at least one of said tubular members in contact with said strip;

an inclined portion formed in series with said contact portion and inclined from said contact portion in a direction away from said strip;

a stepped portion formed in series with said inclined portion and disposed at a predetermined interval from said strip; and

a weld bead provided so as to cover said contact portion and at least a part of said inclined portion;

wherein said contact, inclined and stepped portions are formed by a bend in said end portion.

4. (Original) The welded portion constitution according to claim 3, wherein the contact length between said contact portion and said strip is set within a range of approximately thirty to sixty percent of the sheet thickness of said tubular member.

5. (Original) The welded portion constitution according to claim 3, wherein the interval between said stepped portion and said strip is set within a range of approximately twenty to fifty percent of the sheet thickness of said tubular member.

6. (Withdrawn) An axle case comprising a main body in which both end portions in the longitudinal direction are formed in a tubular form, a tubular spindle which is joined to the two ends in the longitudinal direction of the main body, and a tubular strip which is inserted into the inside of an abutting portion between the main body and spindle, said axle case comprising:

a contact portion formed on an end portion of said main body and/or said spindle in contact with said strip;

an inclined portion formed in series with said contact portion and inclined from said contact portion in a direction away from said strip;

a stepped portion formed in series with said inclined portion and disposed at a predetermined interval from said strip; and

a weld bead provided so as to cover said contact portion and at least a part of said inclined portion.

7. (Withdrawn) A butt welding method for welding tubular members to each other in which a tubular strip is inserted into the inside of the abutting portion, comprising the steps of:

bending an end portion of at least one of said tubular members to form a contact portion which contacts said strip, an inclined portion formed in series with said contact portion and inclined from said contact portion in a direction away from said strip, and a stepped portion formed in series with said inclined portion and disposed at a predetermined interval from said strip; and

butt welding said tubular members to each other such that a weld bead is formed over said contact portion and at least a part of said inclined portion.

8. (Currently Amended) A constitution for a fillet-welded portion between a sheet material and a base material, comprising:

a contact portion formed on an end portion of said sheet material in contact with said base material;

an inclined portion formed in series with said contact portion and inclined from said contact portion in a direction away from said base material;

a stepped portion formed in series with said inclined portion and disposed at a predetermined interval from said base material; and

a weld bead provided so as to cover said contact portion and at least a part of said inclined portion;

wherein said contact, inclined and stepped portions are formed by a bend in said end portion.

9. (Original) The welded portion constitution according to claim 8, wherein the contact length between said contact portion and said base material is set within a range of thirty to sixty percent of the sheet thickness of said sheet material.

10. (Original) The welded portion constitution according to claim 8, wherein the interval between said stepped portion and said base material is set within a range of twenty to fifty percent of the sheet thickness of said sheet material.

11. (Withdrawn) An axle case comprising an upper member and a lower member extending in the direction of vehicle width of a vehicle and joined by being abutted against each other, each having a bent portion which is bent into a substantially circular shape so as to protrude in an upward or downward direction from a central portion in the longitudinal direction, and a hemispherical cover member which is joined to said upper and lower members by fillet welding so as to cover a hole formed in the central portion

of the joint portion between the upper and lower members in the longitudinal direction, said axle case comprising:

a contact portion formed on a peripheral edge portion of said cover member in contact with said upper and lower members;

an inclined portion formed in series with said contact portion and inclined from said contact portion in a direction away from said upper and lower members;

a stepped portion formed in series with said inclined portion and disposed at a predetermined interval from said upper and lower members; and

a weld bead provided so as to cover said contact portion and at least a part of said inclined portion.

12. (Withdrawn) A method of fillet welding a sheet material and a base material, comprising the steps of:

bending an end portion of said sheet material to form a contact portion which contacts said base material, an inclined portion formed in series with said contact portion and inclined from said contact portion in a direction away from said base material, and a stepped portion formed in series with said inclined portion and disposed at a predetermined interval from said base material; and

fillet welding said sheet material to said base material such that a weld bead is formed over said contact portion and at least a part of said inclined portion.

13. (New) The welded portion constitution according to claim 3, wherein said strip is integral with one of said tubular members.